

VZCZCXRO7784
PP RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHGI RUEHJO RUEHMR RUEHRN
DE RUEHKI #0520 1641459
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 121459Z JUN 08
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8116
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK

UNCLAS KINSHASA 000520

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MOPS](#) [KPKO](#) [CG](#) [RW](#) [UN](#)

SUBJECT: GOMA NOTES 06/05/2008: NAIROBI PROCESS - JMG TASK FORCE
VISITS MWENGA

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The JMG Task Force traveled June 5 to Mwenga in South Kivu to observe actions being taken by the Congolese government against FDLR in the area. Three battalions consisting of 1,575 fighters are deployed throughout Mwenga town and district. Government representatives there inspired little confidence. The commanding officer of the FARDC 12th Integrated Battalion claimed it was constrained by resources, but were otherwise capable of discharging their mission. The territorial administrator appeared not to have been properly briefed, and may even be collaborating with the FDLR. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) The Nairobi process Joint Monitoring Group (JMG) Task Force traveled June 5 to Mwenga, South Kivu to observe Congolese government measures against the FDLR in the area. Mwenga is an important FDLR zone: the headquarters of the FDLR Second Division is located in Kigogo, approximately 15 km from Mwenga town.

¶3. (SBU) The Task Force first visited the FARDC 12th Integrated (and retrained) Battalion, which is headquartered in Mwenga and consists of 750 soldiers. It arrived in the area April 7 following training by MONUC at the Luberizi brassage center and is deployed for 90 km along the main Bukavu-Shabunda road. According to the battalion commander, a FARDC colonel, it is constrained by resources, but otherwise capable of discharging its mission. These "constraints," however, were transport, communications, food and medicine. (Note: In a later meeting, MONUC added ammunition to this list. End note.)

¶4. (SBU) The colonel said the battalion does not venture far off the main road, if at all. He said it has good relations with the local population, "except when it does not." He said that that they do not collect taxes and had dismantled roadblocks set up by the battalion previously deployed there.

¶5. (SBU) According to the FARDC, the FDLR is deployed throughout Mwenga town and district. FDLR forces consist of 1,575 fighters in three battalions, and are equipped with anti-aircraft guns, mortars and RPGs. They are located in the forest and hills, where there are no roads. The FARDC claims no contact with the FDLR.

¶6. (SBU) The Rwandan delegate pointedly asked what 750 FARDC troops could do against 1,500 FDLR fighters. The FARDC response: it is currently in the process of establishing a presence. It planned to gradually build up forces in the area, then progressively engage the FDLR.

¶7. (SBU) The Task Force then called on the territorial administrator, who appeared not to have been briefed prior to the meeting, nor possess an understanding of the issues at hand. He claimed, for example, that territorial administrators are not involved in the FDLR public information campaign; he said he had been told that the Amani program was responsible for this. He said he was unfamiliar with the work of, and had never met with, MONUC DDRRR officers. (Note. In fact, MONUC DDRRR operates in the area

and has produced defections. End note.) He claimed he has no contact with the FDLR, but then noted that an FDLR commander had invited him to his wedding (he said he did not attend).

¶18. (SBU) Congolese delegation chief Colonel Augustin Mamba was clearly uncomfortable with the administrator's statements. He intervened frequently to "amplify," "complete" or "enrich" what the administrator was saying. Finally, he invented a weather problem as justification for cutting the meeting short.

¶19. (SBU) The Task Force ended its trip with a briefing from MONUC, a standard presentation on implementation of the Nairobi process which emphasized the continuous training and other support it is giving to the 12th Battalion.

¶10. (SBU) Comment: Task Force members asked few hard questions during the visit to Mwenga, but government representatives there inspired little confidence. In general, the FARDC appeared to be doing little against the FDLR, while the territorial administrator is either completely unaware of the issues at hand or is actively cooperating with the FDLR. According to OCHA, FDLR fighters are active members, even leaders, of his territorial security committee.
End comment

GARVELINK